

Santa Clara County Social Services Agency
CalWORKs County Plan Addendum
UPDATE

December 18, 2008

II. Participation Improvement

- C. ACHIEVING FULL ENGAGEMENT among individuals who are partially participating, not participating, or between activities

New Policy/Strategy (anticipated launch date: January 2009)

Transitional Subsidized Employment (TSE), a form of paid work experience, will be added to the menu of welfare-to-work activities that meet the definition of "core" hours. TSE provides a viable way to boost the county's job placement rate while helping clients meet the 32/35 hours participation requirement and to ultimately improve the County's Work Participation Rate.

Program Design

Santa Clara County's CalWORKs Employment Services (CWES) intends to pilot **Transitional Subsidized Employment (TSE)** as a new activity with roughly 200 CalWORKs clients who are approaching their last 12 months on aid. For clients who are about to time out of cash assistance, TSE is part of a larger coordinated effort to prepare them for that transition.

The County will contract with local education provider Foothill-De Anza Community College's Occupational Training Institute (OTI) to offer CalWORKs clients a TSE program with 3–6 month placements. CWES will refer potential participants to the contractor, which will match applicants with TSE job openings within 3–7 days. TSE placements will likely be at non-profit agencies as these organizations already have an employment infrastructure in place and provide more flexible schedules.

TSE placements will last 13 weeks at 20 hours per week. This timeframe will allow the program to accommodate more clients as well as deter dependency on paid activity. Time extensions (up to a total participation time of 6 months) may be granted based on individual client need. TSE hours will count toward the client's mandated participation in 32/35 hours of welfare-to-work activities per week, and specifically fulfill the 20 "core" hours requirement. Clients will earn the state minimum wage, currently \$8.00 per hour.

OTI has developed an innovative arrangement with the community college system's distance learning courses that will enable CalWORKs clients to meet the remaining "non-core" participation hours without the challenge of arranging for transportation. The proposed design will allow clients to be students at Foothill-De Anza as they earn a combination of credit and non-credit courses that meet the federal definition of "non-core" hours. These courses will provide instruction on a variety of topics which will educate CalWORKs clients on employment-related issues.

The TSE program integrates work experience with other services, such as intensive job search, that support the goal of unsubsidized employment. The ultimate goal of the program is to place a minimum of 70% of the clients referred into unsubsidized paid employment. OTI is responsible for cultivating both subsidized and unsubsidized employment sites for its TSE program participants.

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and

- F. OTHER ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE THE WPR

New Policy/Strategy (effective October 1, 2008)

According to the Final Rule, the federal government allows states to count homework time towards the Welfare-To-Work (WTW) Plan, effective October 1, 2008. As of this date, Santa Clara County opts to count **unsupervised study time** for clients.

Hours spent by a client on studying and completing homework as part of attending academic class times in community colleges, adult education, private schools, and community-based organizations can now be counted toward required hours of participation.